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Christ Compliments A Congregation

Wyatt Sawyer

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CHRIST COMPLIMENTS A CONGREGATION

I KNOW THY WORKS !!!

*Rev. 2:8-11.

INT: Second of seven letters to churches of Asia.
 Why 7? Complete! instructions and warnings !!
 Time of writing: AD 97. Good for all ages.

- I. SMYRNA: 40 mi. N. of Ephesus. Heavy pagan pop.
 Educational center. Hatchery of Idolatry!!
 In 1889 was Turkey's 2nd most imp. harbor.
 Church origin? Prob. Paul's work. 70,000 members.
Angel: Leader: Prob. Polycarp, elder of church.
 Dangerous to be a Chr. More dangerous, elder!!

II. COMPLIMENTS OF CHRIST.ALL

- A. "I know"...3 things. Jesus OMNISCIENT:KNOWING!
 Matt. 12:36-37. Rev. 20:12. *Written! Recorded!*
 1. WORKS: Salt in bland city of sin. Light!!
 2. TRIBULATION: Opposition predicted. Came.
 3. POVERTY: Then, price of obedience to Jesus
 ALSO:

- Know: 4. BLASPHEMY: Lies, half-truths, reproaches,
 bitter revilings. Satan's servants! 9.
 5. RICH: in Faith, Trust, Truth, Obedience,
 Worship, Evangelism & Righteousness.

Ill. Christian salt flavored life • Loving.

*Poem: A LITTLE MORE. Helping.

III. NO COMPLAINTS, CRITICISM NOR CHARGES.

- A. Only Smyrna & Philadelphia free of overt-sin.
 1. PROOF: A congregation CAN exist which has
 NO serious internal problems.
 B. A solid & sound congregation in spite of
 False-Judaizers, Pagans, Romans & Weaklings.
 C. Greatest Test yet to come! V. 10. Suffer:
 Matt.*5:10-12. II Tim. 3:12. * IIP. 2:1-3,9.

IV. GOD'S CONDITIONS FOR SALVATION CLEARLY STATED.

- A. V. 10. Fear nothing! *Matt. 10:28-33.
 1. If imprisoned. Many would be.
 2. Tribulation ten days. Prophecy: Diocletian
 per. church 10 yrs. & 3 mos. Roman Emper.
 3. Even unto death. Especially meaningful to
 Polycarp, friend of Apostle, John, and
 faithful elder. Burned alive on a Sat.,
 Feb. 23, A. D. 155. (1,821 years ago.)

ILL. STORY OF POLYCARP'S MARTYRDOM: Ancient Acct.

1. Time of PUBLIC GAMES. *Minor olympics Smyrna.*
Fever of competition running very high.
LIKE: Commerce & Akard, Dallas. Tex.-OU. Oct
2. Public cry arose: "Away with athiests. Let Polycarp be searched for." He not pagan!
3. The elder could have escaped, but had a dream: pillow on fire. Told disciples, "I must be burned alive!" *Sought seclusion!*
4. Polycarp's location revealed by little Christian boy who broke under torture.
5. Officers sent to arrest him. He ordered them a meal while he spent an hour in prayer.
6. Officers begged him to spare his life by pacifying the mob. Captain: "What harm is it to say, CEASER IS LORD! and to offer a sacrifice to save your life?" Polycarp: "JESUS CHRIST IS MY LORD."
7. PROCOUNSUL gave Polycarp a choice: "Curse the name of Christ and offer a sacrifice to Caesar or you die." Matt. 10:33.
8. Polycarp's reply: "Eighty and six years have I served Him and He has done me no harm. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?"
9. Procounsel warned him again of death by fire
10. POLYCARP: "You threaten me with the fire that burns for a time, and is quickly quenched, for you do not know the fire which awaits the wicked in the Judgment to come and in everlasting punishment! Why are you waiting? Come, do what you will!!"
11. It was the SABBATH DAY, yet the jealous Jew came in masses with branches to set and feed the fire.
12. Soldiers started to nail Polycarp to the stake. He replied, "Leave me as I am. He who gives me power to endure the fire, will grant me to remain in the flames unmoved, even without the security you will give by the nails." He burned to ashes!!!!

INV: V. 10. "AND I WILL GIVE YOU A CROWN OF LIFE."

Polycarp was wearing his within seconds of his suffication in the flames!

You have a crown awaiting you? Can! B-R-C-B.

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